

ASCS programs explained to Berks Countians

By LAUREL SCHAEFFER
Berks County Reporter
LEESPORT, Pa. — The Beef Referendum and ASCS's present request for new acreage reports were the topic of a meeting held June 15, at the Berks County Agricultural Center.

Richard A. Pennay, agricultural program specialist, Pennsylvania ASCS office, explained to nearly 40 interested farmers the purpose behind the referendum and how it would work.

Anyone owning cattle during the past 12 months, including dairymen, are eligible to vote if they registered before June 17. Voting will be between July 5 and 15 at local ASCS offices throughout the country. To have the beef referendum passed, two-thirds of those producers who vote, must vote yes, and at least 50 per cent of the registered voters must vote.

Pennay explained that the purposes of the referendum was for the promotion of beef, consumer education, and research. "The USDA is disinterested in the referendum," he explained, "it is a producer referendum." ASCS is only a vehicle to answer questions and get the votes, he added.

The referendum would

allow a beef board of not more than 68 producers appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominations submitted by eligible producer organizations. These members would not draw a salary but would get expense money, Pennay explained.

The program would be funded by taking three-tenths of one per cent of the price of all cattle sold for the first three years. Afterwards, the board could decide to increase the amount to a maximum of five-tenths of one per cent.

Veal calves would work the same way, Pennay continued. Dispersal sales would also be eligible, but not for more than the slaughter value of the animals, the speaker explained. It is up to the beef board to decide how to determine the slaughter value, if they are to include them in the program. "The board can change the rules so that dispersal sales would not have to pay, he added.

There would be no deduction for beef used for home consumption, Pennay told the interested farmers, and the contribution is voluntary, but the deduction would be automatically taken off. A producer could apply to have the money



Richard A. Pennay, agricultural program specialist from the ASCS office, explains the beef check-off program to Berks Countians.

returned if he has proof of sale, said the speaker.

Pennay also told the listeners, that if the secretary of the Board or 10 per cent of the producers who voted feel there is dissatisfaction with the program, a new referendum could be called.

Pennay also explained why farmers are being asked

to give crop reports. "We want to update our farm history data," he explained. "The problem is determining what the price of the crops will be."

The agricultural program specialist told the farmers that presently there is a carry-over of more than one billion bushels of wheat, enough to supply the United

States for two years. He also told them that this year the expected harvest is for two billion bushels.

Wheat seems to be the worst grain problem this year, he stated, but feed grains are at a threshold level. "Presently we are at a point of having 32 million tons in stock, and with favorable weather it can go to 60 million tons by the time 1978's crop is ready," said Pennay. "We could be in trouble with feed grains by next year," he concluded.

"Irrigation is a big contributing factor to our increased production," he continued to explain, "other countries are also increasing production, especially Argentina and Brazil."

"This is why the ASCS wants to decrease the physical acreage of some crops. The target price system is part of our marketing system, a way to give you a fair price for your product," explained Pennay. "You have to have your share of the national dollar so you can run your farm," he added.

"Do you know that one year in Pennsylvania, 500,000 acres were out of production?" he asked.

The program is v and a few change taken place from program of the 1970's. The new law is be fair to the tenants landlords, Pennay. However, all of the haven't been worked. "Register your acre Barley and Wheat 30, 1977 and you sorgham, and acreage by September insisted. "Then y decide later if you participate in the pr he explained. If y report any acreage farm can't have any credit, he added.

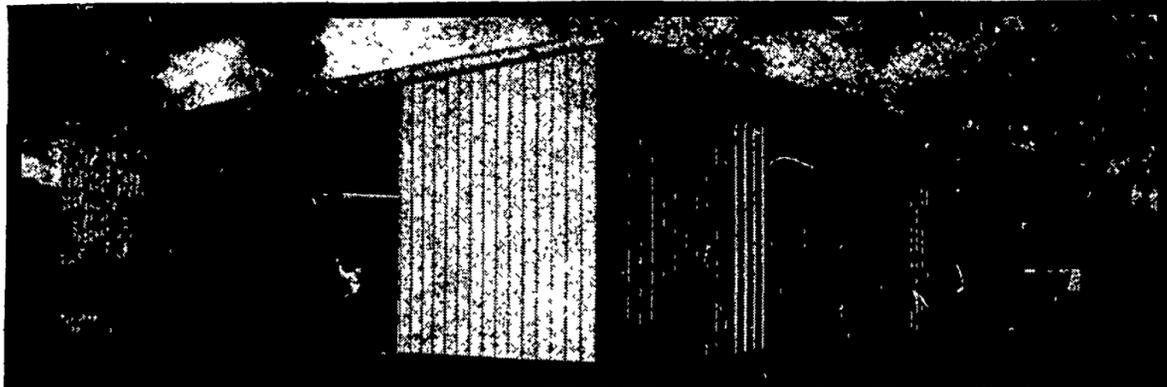
The new national support rate for 19 were estimated by P be close to: \$1.94 for \$3.43-soybeans; sorghum; \$1.47-barley \$1.13-oats.

James Haldeman County agent and Bohn, ASCS, also during the program storage and loan ra



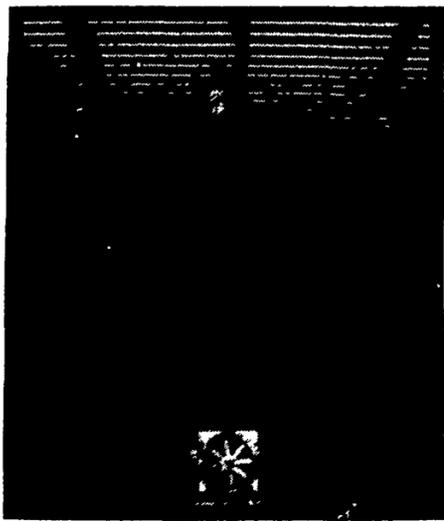
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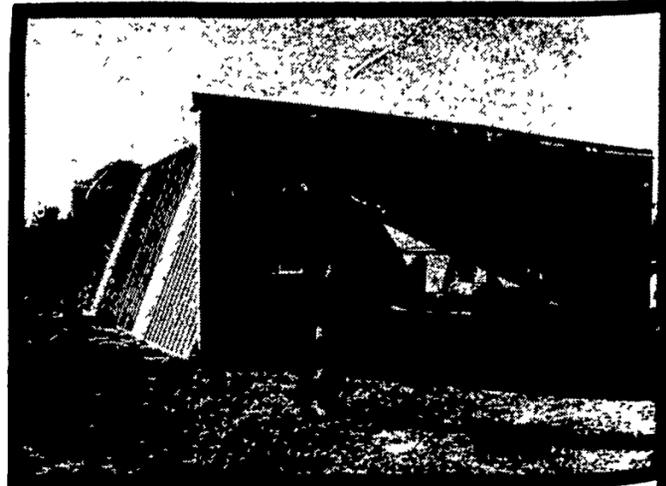
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